

Message Text

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TAGS: SOPN, PO, U.S.

SUBJ: MEDIA REACTION ON SECOND FORD-CARTER DEBATE

1. MEDIA GAVE DEBATE HEAVY ATTENTION, PRED
CATABLY FOCUSING ON
BOTH CANDIDATES' STATEMENTS ON PORTUGAL, ROLE OF
COMMUNISM IN WESTERN EUROPE. REMARKS WERE INCENTIVE
FOR IMMEDIATE ATTACK BY LEFTIST AND SOCIALIST PRESS, BUT
MOST NEWSPAPERS SIMPLY GAVE THE REMARKS STRAIGHT PLAY.
SAMPLE HEADLINES: OCT. 8 FRONT PAGE "DIARIO DE NOTICIAE"
-- "FORD STATEMENT IN TELEVISION DEBATE: ESTABLISHMENT OF
DEMOCRACY IN PORTUGAL WAS ONE OF THE SUCCESSES OF AMERICAN
POLICY"; OCT. 8 FRONT-PAGE "O SEculo" -- "FORD AND CARTER
ON TV; COMMUNIST FAILUREE IN PORTUGAL DELIGHT THE U.S.";
OCT. 7 "DIARIO DE LISBOA" -- "IN DEBATE WITH CARTER:
FORD CLAIMS SUCCESS IN PORTUGAL". AT LEAST TWO PAPERS
COUNTERBALANCED FORD/CARTER REMARKS WITH COVERAGE ON SENATOR
MCGOVERN STATEMENT IN RECENTLY RELEASED SENATE FOREIGN
RELATIONS DOCUMENT. "A CAPITAL" CARRIED SEPARATE STORY ON
THAT WHICH WAS HEADLINED, "MCGOVERN REPORTRELEASED:
'SOVIET INFLUENCE IN PORTUGAL WAS NOT SIGNIFICANT'." OTHER
DETAILS ON REACTION:

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PAGE 02 LISBON 06889 081544Z

2. SOCIALIST PAPER WAS CRITICAL: OCT. 7 "A LUTA", CARRIED
BACK-PAGE EDITORIAL, STATING: "CHRONICALLY INCAPABLE OF
VIEWING THE WORLD AS ANY MORE THAN AN AMPLIFIED IMAGE OF
THEIR OWN BELLY BUTTONS, THESE (AMERICAN) POLITICIANS FORGET
THAT THE MAIN AGENTS OF THE SOVIET/COMMUNIST PARTY FA
LURE
IN PORTUGAL WERE THE COURAGEOUS FIGHT BY THE PORTUGUESE
PEOPLE FOR DEMOCRACY AND NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE AND THE FUMBLING
ACTION OF THE COMMUNISTS. LIKEWISE THEY FORGET THAT THE
AMERICAN EAGLE HAS LESS AND LESS CHANCE OF MAINTAINING THE FORMER
SELF-PROCLAIMED ROLE OF POLICEMAN FOR THE WORLD ..."

3. CENTER-RIGHT WAS LESS STRIDENT: UNSIGNED NOTE IN
OCT. 8 "O DIA" WAS HEADLINED, "GERALD FORD IGNORES REALITY
OF PORTUGUESE POLITICS." OF FORD REMARKS, PAPER SAID:
"THIS CONTROVERSIAL STATEMENT WHICH IGNORES (IN ITS ELECTORAL
OPPORTUNISM) THE PORTUGUESE PEOPLE'S STRONG RESISTENCE
AGAINST THE GONCALVIST/
COMMUNIST DICTATORSHIP IN THE SUMMER OF 1975 WAS ONLY ONE OF
THE WEAK POINTS IN THE FORD PRESENTATION. HE (FORD) THIS TIME
WAS CLEARLY DEFEATED BY CARTER..."

4. COMMUNIST-LINING PAPER SINKS TEETH IN: OCT. 8
"O DIAR
O" FRONT-PAGE EDITORIAL SAID "PRESIDENT FORD LEFT
IT QUITE CLEAR THAT HE VIEWED PORTUGAL AS A PROPERTY OF
THE U.S. WHAT IMPRESSES US IS THE CONFESSION OF U.S.
INTERFERENCE IN INTERNAL PORTUGUESE AFFAIRS.
SO SHOCKING, SO INSOLENT WAS THE ATTITUDE OF PRESIDENT GERALD
FORD THAT THE DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATE (ALSO A POLITICAL
CONSERVATIVE), IN REPLY, REMINDED 100 MILL
ON TELEVISION
VIEWERS THAT THE U.S. HAS ADOPTED AN ALMOST ENTIRELY
NEGATIVE ATTITUDE REGARDING THE PORTUGUESE
REVOLUTION SINCE APRIL 1974..."

5. TELEVISION ERRS: STATETV OCT. 7 PRIME-TIME EVENING
NEWSCAST GAVE BASICALLY STRAIGHTFORWARD REPORT ON DEBATE
REMARKS ABOUT PORTUGAL, USING SATELLITE IMAGE OF FORD AT
PRECISE MOMENT HE WAS DISCUSSING PORTUGAL. NEWSCASTER,
POSSIBLY MISREADING HIS SCRIPT, QUOTED CARTER SLIGHTLY
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PAGE 03 LISBON 06889 081544Z

INACCURATELY AS SAYING HE THOUGHT "THE UNITED STATES
HAD TOLERATED A DICTATORSHIP IN PORTUGAL MUCH LONGER
THAN IN OTHER NATION."
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